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MINUTES

The Town of Manteo Board of Commissioners held their Recessed July 21, 2021 meeting at 5:00 p.m. at 407 Budleigh Street, Manteo, NC.

The following members were present:

Mayor Bobby Owens
Mayor Pro-Tem Betty Selby
Commissioner Darrell Collins
Commissioner Christine Walker
Commissioner Jason Borland
Commissioner Eddie Mann

The following members were absent:

Commissioner Richie Burke

Also present at the meeting were:

Town Manager James Ayers
Town Attorney Ben Gallop
IT Director Carl Woody
Town Planner Melissa Dickerson
Town Clerk Jamie Whitley

Mayor Bobby Owens called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Adoption of Agenda as presented or amended

MOTION: A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Selby and seconded by Commissioner Walker to approve the agenda and was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor Pro-Tem Betty Selby, Commissioners Mann, Borland, Walker, and Collins. Nays: None. Absent: Commissioner Burke. **Motion carried.**

SUBJECT: Adoption of the items on the Consent Agenda as presented or amended

MOTION: A motion was made by Commissioner Collins and seconded by Commissioner Burke to approve the Consent Agenda with the following item: New World Festival of the Arts Facility Use and was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor Pro-Tem Betty Selby, Commissioners Mann, Borland, Walker, and Collins. Nays: None. Absent: Commissioner Burke. **Motion carried.**

PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

SUBJECT: Department Head Reports

The Department Heads gave their department head reports to the Board of Commissioners in person. A slide show presentation accompanied each report followed by a spotlight presentation from the Planning Department.

Water and Sewer Department - Water and Sewer Director Josh O'Brien

- Mr. O'Brien started his presentation with the Water and Sewer Department's Operation, Maintenance, Inspection, and Billing Chart. He informed the Board that they had a high number of service requests in June; 45 requests for water services and 45 requests for sewer services.
- There was a mainline blockage that occurred due to a below-grade sewer line clean-out that was discovered due to a sinkhole. It took the Water and Sewer Department about two to three days to clear the sewer mains with the Vac truck.
- The Annual Drinking Water Quality Report is now available online and at Town Hall for the 2020 year.
- A sludge haul of 294,000 gallons of stabilized sludge was removed from the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) between January and June.

Information Technology Department - Information Technology Director Carl Woody

- Mr. Woody informed the Board that Wi-Fi has been installed at the Town Common.
- He used a product called ArcGIS to create interactive online maps that allow people to put in their addresses to see if they live within the town limits.
- Three interactive kiosks have been purchased for a total of \$7,000 with a three-year warranty. The cost would normally be \$5,000 per kiosk. Over 200 audio and image files have been received from the Outer Banks History Center for the interactive kiosks.
- The United States Coast Guard Historian Office and National Archives have been contacted for historic information but they are not allowing visitors at this time due to Covid. They can provide scanned copies of information if we know the specific dates that we are looking for.
- Currently, he is looking for a developer that can develop the design for the interactive kiosks that can put all of the information that he has gathered on the interactive kiosks.
- Kiosks will be placed at the Boathouse, Pea Island Cookhouse, and Roanoke Marshes Lighthouse.

Waterfront Operations Department - Maritime Coordinator Barry Wickre

- Mr. Wickre informed the Board that the Youth Sailing Camp was June 14-21, 2021.
- This was the 21st season of the youth sailing program. There have been about 3,000 sailors and some of this year's sailors are children of past sailors from 21 years ago. They have 87 sailors registered to date for the program this summer.
- The Tuesday evening sailing program is going very well. This program is for any youth that has been through the youth sailing program to come on Tuesday nights and take a friend or their parent to go out sailing by themselves in Shallowbag Bay for a couple of hours.
- 50 boats visited the marina in June and every visitor to our marina gets a link to the Discover Manteo website so that they can know what is going on in Town. The average stay for June was seven nights. More boats are coming in for a day or two and extending their stay for another day or two.
- 388 boats visited the marina during Fiscal Year 20-21.
- This is the first anniversary of using our marina operation software, Dockwa, which is the boat reservation system for the marina.
- Saturday, July 31 will be the 18th annual One Design Regatta. There are 40 sailors registered right now and we have sailors coming from places like Hatteras, Duck, and New Bern. Sailors will be accompanied by their parents.

- Saturday, August 14th will be the 8th Annual Kids Fishing Tournament. They usually have about 100 kids to attend.
- Saturday, October 30th is the 9th Annual Wooden Boat Show.
- He thanked the volunteers who worked for 144 hours in June. They replaced planks on the boardwalk, touch-up painted the lighthouse and prepped for the summer.

Police Department - Police Chief Vance Haskett

- Chief Haskett took a class on Six Big Roles of a Great Leader and an anti-harassment class.
- Investigator Moore attended the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force with the State Bureau of Investigation.
- Investigator Steele had training on Child Death Investigation.
- K-9 Boscoe and Investigator Moore completed four K-9 deployments on traffic stops in June.
- K-9 Boscoe and Investigator Moore completed two K-9 deployments to look for drugs for the Sheriff's Department and one K-9 demonstration for a church youth group.
- Manteo Police Department had 116 dispatch calls from Central Communications and a total of 1,766 calls in June.
- There were 19 investigations and 15 out of 19 of those investigations have been closed and cleared.
- There were 21 ordinance violations which consisted of mainly parking violations.

Commissioner Collins asked what are the restrictions for golf carts in the Town Limits?

Chief Haskett stated that the golf cart has to have plates and have everything a regular vehicle would have. It needs to be able to pass an inspection as a car would. State and Town golf carts are exempt. Most golf carts are not legal to drive on state-maintained roads.

Finance Department - Finance Director Shannon Twiddy

- The budget and ordinance for Fiscal Year (FY) 21-22 have been posted on the Town of Manteo Website.
- The Budget will be updated by our IT Director so that everyone can see the real-time expenditures and revenues.
- Finance is in the middle of closing out FY 20-21 and preparing for the Audit.
- The Auditor would like to be here on August 30th and August 31st.
- The Workman's Comp Audit is scheduled for September 13th.
- Jo Briggs has been working on professional certifications and has completed the Utility Billing course. She is now taking the Financial Management class, which is one of five required courses for a Finance Officer Certification.

Public Works Department - Public Works Director Frankie Woodley

- Public Works installed steel plates over the drain outlets that run from the Tranquil House Inn parking lot to Queen Elizabeth Avenue.
- They removed tree roots from the sidewalk in front of the Candy Shop on Budleigh Street and they reinstalled the bricks along that sidewalk.
- They ground down the sidewalk in front of the Pea Island Cookhouse.
- They painted the fence around the Rain Garden off the highway.

Community and Economic Development Department - Program Manager Michele Bunce

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- Ms. Bunce introduced the newly updated walking and bicycling map. These were paid for with a mini-grant from the Albemarle Regional Planning Organization. They have been distributed to the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, local businesses and they are available at Town Hall and in staff's work vehicles.
- The Special Events Committee is working on strategic planning and training.
- Ms. Bunce joined the International Live Events Association to get more education on the discipline of Special Events and it is great for networking because it is all over the world. The Town of Manteo is going to be a member of the Raleigh Triad Area Regional Chapter.
- The Downtown Associate Community (DAC) program is collecting and organizing data, which consists of community assets, economic drivers, and a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats/Challenges). The next DAC meeting will be on Wednesday, July 28th at 4:00 p.m.

Planning Department - Planner Melissa Dickerson

- Ms. Dickerson gave the Board updates on some of the Town projects.
- They met with the engineer and architect for Phase II of the Town Common, which includes the bathroom structure, drinking fountains, water bottle fountain, shade structures, and additional landscaping.
- A project kick-off meeting was held with the engineer for the Davis Lot.
- The westside stormwater project has begun with a site visit that included walking the entire system on that side with two engineers; that project is currently in the design phase.
- In 2019, the Planning Department completed a review for the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS).
- The Insurance Services Office (ISO) conducts a review to help distinguish communities with effective building code adoption and enforcement through this comprehensive program.
- The BCEGS program assigns each municipality a grade from one to ten, with one being exemplary.
- In 2019, the Town's BCEGS rating increased from a seven to a four.
- The Town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS), which is similar to BCEGS.
- The Town receives a rating from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) for its CRS program.
- The Town's CRS classification cannot be lower than its BCEGS classification. The Town had to improve its BCEGS score before it could increase its CRS score.
- The Town conducted a five-year review for CRS and received confirmation from FEMA on July 9th that our CRS has increased from a seven to a five.
- This rate increase will provide additional discounts for flood insurance policies for properties located in special flood hazard areas beginning October 1, 2021.

A spotlight video presentation from the Planning Department was shown to the Board. This video will be available on the Town of Manteo's YouTube page.

The mayor praised the Planning Department's presentation and encouraged everyone to look at their flood insurance policy and not drop their flood insurance just because it is cheaper because you never know when you might need it.

Mr. Ayers assured the Board that we will get this information out to the public about the flood insurance and the team's efforts to help reduce flood insurance rates for residents here in Town.

SUBJECT: Update on Town-Sponsored Special Events

Mr. Ayers gave an update on all of the Special Events with a spotlight on New Year's Eve. Mr. Ayers went over the organizational events and their budgets.

Organizational Events	Budget	Dates
Downtown Market	\$2,000.00	Mid-May to Mid-September
Community/Children's Activities	\$20,000.00	Various
Dare Days	\$63,000.00	1 st Weekend in June
4 th of July	\$65,000.00	July 4 th
Christmas Events & Decorations	\$17,500.00	1st Weekend in December
New Year's Eve	\$20,000.00	December 31 st

- Downtown Market is doing well. During the pandemic, we supported our vendors through social media and we did have some vendors that did not come back but that is ok. We have reports of a high number of sales and a few vendors had to drop out because they ran out of materials.
- Community and Children's Activities have been on hold due to Covid but now, hoping that Covid is receding, we can start working with staff and the Special Events Committee to do neighborhood-level events.
- We are planning to extend Dare Day to Dare Days and involve the entire town by having a multi-day event not just downtown but at the highway corridor and the west side of town.
- We just had the 4th of July event and we got overwhelming positive feedback on the fireworks (Pyrotecnico). Our team worked well with law enforcement, public works, emergency management, etc. People liked the lawn games. We got positive feedback about the band but there were two negative comments based on musical preference. We followed what we had before and had Buddy Brown, who had less of a presence in terms of food than he has had before but he did bring funnel cakes. We brought in another treat and we reached out to several non-profits to try and supplement since Buddy had part of his organization not there. However, staffing problems seemed to affect a lot of people. We did not make this a food truck event because we looked at prior minutes and local restaurants were concerned about bringing a lot of food trucks except for an established event like Dare Day which is all day unlike the 4th of July, which starts at 3:00 p.m., not during lunchtime. We had some restaurants open that were doing very well. We did have some restaurants that were closed due to staffing issues. If the Board would like to discuss food trucks, then we can revisit this discussion, we just wanted to be respectful to what we have done in the past.
- Christmas Events will take place the 1st weekend in December and we have already had discussions about Christmas with staff and the Special Events Committee. A subcommittee is in the works. We are looking at using some of the events that we did during the pandemic like Santa's Ride. This time we will have the streets published because we do not have crowd gathering restrictions.
- New Year's Eve has a budget of \$20,000 and that is for December 31st.

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Departmental Events	Department	Dates
Summer One-Design Regatta	Maritime Museum	Last Saturday in July
National Night Out	Manteo Police Department	1 st Tuesday in August
Kids Fishing Tournament	Maritime Museum	2 nd Saturday in August
Wooden Boat Show	Maritime Museum	Last Friday and Saturday in October

- National Night Out is coming up and it is sponsored by Law Enforcement nationwide. Manteo Police Department will be hosting this event but there will be support from staff, the Special Events Committee, and the Community-Police Advisory Board.
- The Maritime Museum hosts three events: Summer One-Design Regatta, Kids Fishing Tournament, and the Wooden Boat Show.

Third-Party Events	Organizer	Dates
First Friday	Dare County Arts Council	April to November
Juneteenth	PIPSI	June 19 th
Pirate's Cove Billfish Tournament	Pirate's Cove	1 st through 2 nd Saturday in August
New World Festival of the Arts	Dare County Arts Council	2 nd week of August
OBX Pridefest	OBX Pride	2 nd Saturday in September
Bluegrass Festival	Bluegrass Island Trading Co.	3 rd Week of October
Kids Event	Coastal Family Church	October 31 st

- First Friday is organized by Dare County Arts Council, not the Town, and it began July 2021.
- Juneteenth was organized by the Pea Island Preservation Society Inc.
- Pirate's Cove Billfish Tournament is coming up in August and it is a big event.
- New World Festival of the Arts is organized by Dare County Arts Council. This is on town property but it is not a town event.
- OBX Pride reached out and got their date set for OBX Pridefest this year.
- The Bluegrass Festival is held at Roanoke Island Festival Park.
- The Coastal Family Church does an event on Halloween and so does Mt. Olivet Church. These are two groups working near the same area.

Mr. Ayers presented to the Board the current plan for New Year's Eve. There is \$20,000 appropriated as directed for a family-friendly evening event. The expected duration is from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with a focus on activities for children such as games, booths, food, music, face painting, entertainers, and more. There will be a Children's "Early Ball Drop" at 8:00 p.m.

There has been some feedback from the organizers of the prior event. The previous event was called New Year in the New World. It was held in 2017, 2018, and 2019 and the typical duration was 5:00 p.m. to midnight. There were children's activities including the "Early Ball Drop" and music, food, entertainment, and activities. There were fireworks at midnight. This was a Third-Party Event that was founded by an "Organizing Committee," which consisted of a couple of local merchants that were not a single entity or 501(c)(3) non-profit. The Town of Manteo assisted with this event by applying for the firework grant because the organizing committee

could not apply for the grant since they were not a non-profit of 501(c)(3). The Town provided staff work and other assistance such as financial support.

Information has been requested by one of the event organizers about this event and according to the prior minutes, the Board was clear that this is not a Town-owned event but assistance would be provided. Based on the financial information from the Finance Department, the Town had a net loss of \$14,667.37 in 2017; a net loss of \$15,452.74 in 2018; and a net loss of \$37,494.30 in 2019. These net losses do not include the cost of staff hours or overtime paid.

There have been some suggestions made and those raise policy issues. The Board of Commissioners would be required to take action to:

- Change the budget appropriation for this event.
 - The Board has budget alternatives that include, but are not limited to, elimination of a different event (budget transfer) or increase the appropriation for this event (budget amendment).
- Take ownership of this event.
 - Taking ownership of this event impacts issues ranging from insurance to liability to permitting.
- Accept a grant.
 - The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau Event Grant Program Application period is from August 1st -15th.
 - The Town Manager has delegated authority to apply for the grant but the Board must approve the acceptance of the grant.

We must look at the community and economic development and determine the costs and benefits. We want to have safe events that benefit the community and taxpayers.

The Board discussed the topic of New Year's Eve. Mayor Owens stated that New Year's Eve should be one of Manteo's major events. We have the 4th of July and Dare Days so there is no reason why we couldn't have a New Year's Eve celebration. He stated that Program Manager Michele Bunce could come up with a good title and we could bring in people from Tidewater Virginia and Eastern North Carolina. He stated that no one else has one that night and we could make this a major event. He doesn't think that the businesses should have to raise money for the event but that this should be a major event in the Town of Manteo. He would like to take the event over completely. He has heard about the confetti and if people don't want to work on New Year's Eve, then he is sorry but every New Year's Eve event he has seen in other places they have confetti. He is on the Tourism Board and he spoke with Mr. Nettles about funding for the fireworks for New Year's Eve. We will have to fill out an application but he saw no reason why we couldn't get money for fireworks. He thinks that the kids' program is wonderful and if we want to do an early drop then that is fine but New Year's Eve changes at 12:01 a.m. Mr. Ayers knows the cost of fireworks and the Tourism Bureau seems that they would help support us to get the fireworks. He thinks that this will be a good idea and enhancement for the Town of Manteo if we have a New Year's Eve event. It will not just be for the people of Manteo but for visitors to come and eat at restaurants and stay at the hotels.

Commissioner Collins looked at the financial information and asked if we lost about \$65,000 in the three years that this event has taken place? Mr. Ayers responded yes. Commissioner Collins asked if the cost of the fireworks would be different.

Mr. Ayers reached out to the fireworks vendor already and they said that they are available for that date. The cost estimate for them was \$43,000 to \$45,000. He stated that if we can find a way to get more money from the Visitors Bureau then that could offset some of the loss but the fireworks remain in that low to mid 40's range. In the past, we have not asked the businesses for donations for New Year's Eve. We have refrained from the past practice of asking businesses for donations for Town events. We want to show the businesses that we support them. We buy local to show the business that we support them and not take money out of their pockets. We do not ask for donations for our events. We can try to get more grant money but it will cost more money from the Town to host this event.

Commissioner Walker asked why is this event not being held at the Nags Head event site if it is going to cost \$80,000? She stated that she doesn't think that there is a benefit to the Town and that it is probably more of a headache to most working-class people. She disagrees with the mayor and doesn't want Town employees to have to work on New Year's Eve. She explained that the issue with the confetti was that it was not supposed to be there. They said it was biodegradable, however, it was not supposed to be thrown and it was thrown anyway. We have a tremendous Christmas Event. She and the people she has spoken to do not see the benefit of this event. People have to get up and go to work the next day and they don't want to hear fireworks at midnight in the wintertime.

Commissioner Borland stated that looking at the past, kind of shows the need for the Business Association because it is tough to partner with an unorganized group of merchants. He stated that he thinks if we are going to do it then we have to do it the way the mayor suggested and take the event over completely. He respectfully disagrees with Commissioner Walker because he thinks this will be great for the Town of Manteo. It is the biggest thing around and it has been a great event in the past. He stated that normally, businesses close but there has been discussion about staying open. He stated that in the past we had made a decision not to do it and, in his opinion, that was a mistake. He stated that it is a good event and the Town should take it because the community impact is having a busier winter. He stated that the Special Events Committee is very supportive of this event. He stated that the people he has talked to are in support of this event and are surprised that this is not a Town event.

Commissioner Mann stated that his opinion is that this should not be a partnered event but a town-sponsored event and the Town should take it over. We would have ownership and be able to correct and control any issues such as the confetti issue or any other issue. He thinks this is a good event during the off-season and if we can celebrate with each other that is a good thing. He doesn't think that we operate any event that has a gain in revenue. It is not about gaining revenue but about spending time together with each other and celebrating the new year. He stated that after a year and a half, we need an event to spend time together.

Mayor Pro-Tem Selby stated that she has attended the event in the past and the number of people that showed up speaks for itself because there were a lot of people downtown enjoying the event. She stated that other than the financial impact the event spoke for itself and after Covid people

will certainly attend and appreciate what the Town of Manteo does for this event. She asked how many events town-sponsored events lost money because this cannot be the only one? Even if we lose money, this event is good for the Town coming off of Covid. She fully supports it.

Commissioner Walker stated that she has attended the event in the past as well. We have a Christmas event two or three weeks before this event that people get out and see each other. The money that we are talking about right now is a penny on the tax rate. She stated that if the rest of the Board wants to vote for it then that is fine but she will not vote for it and she is not going to support it. The supporters and the organizing committee know how she feels and that she has felt this way since the very beginning. She supports the family-friendly part of it that ends at 8:00 p.m. After that, it is music and drinking and there are hardly any businesses open maybe a few restaurants and motels. She is not disregarding any of that because it is great for them to benefit but it does not warrant the type of money that we are putting out for it. This is the fourth or fifth year that we have talked about it and it feels like there was a reason why it wasn't a town event in the beginning but she will do what the Board wants to do.

This topic was for discussion so staff will prepare this topic for Board action at the August 4th meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the public are invited to address the Board of Commissioners on any topic. Public Comment is not intended to require the Board to answer any impromptu questions or to take any action on items brought up during the public comment period. Speakers will address all the comments to the Board as a whole and not one individual Commissioner. Discussions between speakers and members of the audience will not be allowed. Time limits are 3 minutes per person or 5 minutes per group. Please identify yourself and your location so that your statements can be recorded.

No one wished to address the Board.

MAYOR'S/COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Mayor Owens: He wants the police officers' salaries to be adequate like those for the other municipalities in Dare County. He stated that we maybe need to task the Community-Police Advisory Board with finding out if the police officers' salaries are adequate or not. The advisory board can work with the Town Manager. He stated that our police are in just as much danger as the police on the beach and he wants to make sure that our police officers' salaries are similar to those officers on the beach. We have a good police force and he doesn't want our police to leave and apply for employment at other municipalities in Dare County.

Mayor Pro-Selby: She agrees with the mayor about the pay for the police officers because they do have the same risk. We do not want Manteo to become a training ground for officers. We should be able to hold our own. The police department does an excellent job and she supports them having comparable salaries.

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Commissioner Walker: She wanted to know if there are sprinklers at the Town Common. She asked if the drinking fountains are back on. Mr. Ayers stated that the drinking fountains are back on except for the one that was vandalized. The plan is to have drinking fountains at the Town Common as well.

Commissioner Mann: He stated that Planner Dickerson did a great job and she saved the people of Manteo a lot of money. He stated that all town employees should be paid more and be trained more so that we can retain our employees and recruit the cream of the crop from other places if needed. He doesn't know if there is a salary high enough for what town employees deserve but he agrees that salaries should be looked at for the police department. He would also like to see the training budgets increased for all town employees as well. He would like to see all of our town employees make similar or maybe even a little bit more than neighboring towns.

Commissioner Borland: He stated that we have an awesome police force and they do a great job and he hopes that they are compensated as they should be. He stated that everyone has different opinions and he hopes that we get lots of public comments on New Year's Eve before we make a decision; so that we can make the best decision for the community.

Commissioner Collins: He asked about an update on the AME Zion Church lease agreement. Mr. Ayers informed him that it has gone to the town attorney's office. The lease was submitted a while back and the Bishop was willing to sign. However, there was a question about the attestation and the flow of the title. The Town Attorney's office is working on that issue. Attorney Gallop stated that this is being handled by his partner, Robert Hobbs, who is a real estate expert. He will follow up with Attorney Hobbs.

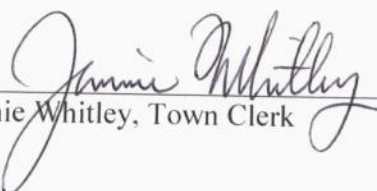
Commissioner Collins agrees about the salaries for the police department. They did a feasibility study on the salaries a few years ago. He thinks that they increased the salaries of the new employees to be comparable to the other municipalities. This is a good thing to look at.

Mayor Pro-Tem Selby thanked Chief Haskett, Sgt. James Burroughs, and Town Manager Ayers for helping with the Monday Night Alive program and coming to teach the kids about safety when walking on the streets and bike safety. They gave the children a few items to take home and they were very happy. She thanked them for their community support.

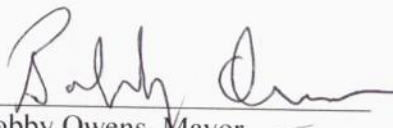
There being no further business to come before the Board or other persons to be heard, a motion was made by Commissioner Mann and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Selby and the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m. and was approved by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor Pro-Tem Betty Selby, Commissioners Mann, Borland, Walker, and Collins. Nays: None. Absent: Commissioner Burke. **Motion carried.**

This the 21st day of July 2021.

ATTEST:


Jamie Whitley, Town Clerk




Bobby Owens, Mayor